REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2001-2002

BY

TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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MAY 31, 2002

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(EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During September 2001, a customer satisfaction survey was designed and administered by the Survey Research Center (SRC) of the University of North Texas and the TWDB to assess customers' satisfaction with the TWDB products and services they have used and their familiarity with other products and services the TWDB offers. All customers were asked to evaluate the service provided by the TWDB overall. Additionally, customers identified as having contacted the Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS), the Office of Project Finance and Construction Assistance (OPFCA), and/or the Planning and Data Resources divisions were asked additional questions about each department's service delivery.

Overall, the TWDB was rated highly, with 94.8% of all respondents giving an excellent (52.8%) or good (42.0%) rating. Ninety-six percent of the respondents reported that they intend to use TWDB products or services again in the future and would recommend the agency to others. Only 5.3% of customers interviewed stated that they had reported a problem with a product or service in the past two years, and most reported that their problem had been addressed.

Departmental ratings were consistently favorable among TWDB offices. Ninety-six percent of customers who have used TNRIS products and services stated that they were either very satisfied (53.0%) or somewhat satisfied (43.3%), while 96.3% of OPFCA customers reported that they were either very satisfied (45.4%) or somewhat satisfied (50.9%), and 97% of Planning and Data Resources customers reported that that are very satisfied (47.4%) or somewhat satisfied (49.3%).

Ratings for specific questions about each office's products, services, and staff were also high. Among all departments, the highest ratings were given for items evaluating the staff's knowledge, helpfulness, and courtesy, while customers assigned the lowest ratings to items assessing the ease of locating the right employee to assist them.

Customers' familiarity with various products and services varied considerably. Respondents were most familiar with Regional Water Planning (81% very familiar or somewhat familiar), publications (79% very familiar or somewhat familiar), State Water Planning (77% very familiar or somewhat familiar), water conservation planning assistance (76.8% very familiar or somewhat familiar), and financial assistance programs (71% very familiar or somewhat familiar). Respondents were least familiar with the State Water Bank (62.7% not familiar).

Respondents were prompted to provide verbatim suggestions for improvement. Suggestions for improvement were provided by just over 25% of survey participants. The most common suggestions offered regarded ensuring the accuracy of data and information, reducing bureaucracy and "red tape," increased contact with the TWDB staff, increased funding opportunities, and enhanced cooperation among TWDB offices and between the TWDB and other state agencies.

SURVEY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

As part of an initiative to assess the effectiveness of the agency's programs and services, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) has regularly commissioned a comprehensive survey on customer satisfaction. The TWDB first began to elicit customer feedback in 1993 with the creation of an External Customer Survey designed to determine how effectively the agency's programs and services were meeting customers' needs. Results from this survey led to significant improvements to the TWDB's loan programs. The agency also conducted customer surveys in 1996 and 1998 to gauge the agency's performance and success in satisfying customers' expectations.

During the month of September 2001, a customer satisfaction survey was designed and administered by the Survey Research Center (SRC) of the University of North Texas for the TWDB. In addition to fulfilling the Legislative requirements of SB 1563, the survey was also intended to:

- Identify the programs and services used by customers and assess their familiarity with other TWDB offerings;

- Measure customer satisfaction with individual programs, including the Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS), Office of Project Finance and Construction Assistance (OPFCA), and the Planning and Data Resources departments;

- Assess the overall quality of programs and services provided by the TWDB; and

- Assess the TWDB's problem resolution process.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument was produced jointly by TWDB and SRC staff members. After an initial meeting in August 2001, a questionnaire was constructed. Several versions were produced, with the final version approved by TWDB staff members before interviewing began. The instrument was designed to include general questions that would be asked of all respondents and specific questions regarding TNRIS, OPFCA, and Planning and Data Resources that would be asked of respondents who were familiar with those departments.

SAMPLING METHODS AND DATA LIMITATIONS

The TWDB provided SRC with a list of approximately 8,000 individuals who had contacted the agency over the past several years. The list was compiled by standardizing and merging individual customer lists from each of the TWDB's program areas and encompassed all TWDB strategies outlined in the 2002-2003 General Appropriations Act.

The target number of completed surveys was set at 500. To achieve this goal, an initial sample of 1,150 customers was randomly selected for contact from the customer pool. Toward the end of the data collection period, an additional sample of 737 numbers was drawn so that the target of 500 completed interviews could be attained. Table 1 contains the number of customer records provided by each area of the agency.

TABLE 1: POPULATION DATA FILE	
Program Area	**Records Provided**
Texas Natural Resources Information System	
All customers	318
Planning and Data Resources	
Resource planning groups (RPG)	72
RPG planning assistance	320
Regional water planning groups (RWPG)	20
RWPG members	396
Hydrographic survey	20
Network cooperators	23
Water wells	1,020*
Conservation technical assistance	2,763*
Conservation literature	1,511*
Conservation planning	425
Stakeholders/roundtable	145
Office of Project Finance and Construction Assistance	
Financial advisors	46
Consultants	611*
Bond counsel	86
Agricultural grants	104
Texas communities	141
EDAP	10
TOTAL	**8,031**

**Because these groups were over-represented in the customer pool,
the number of customers sampled from each of these groups was capped at 300.*

Because the various TWDB program areas use different methods to capture customer contact information, telephone numbers were not provided for many of the customers in the sample. In many cases where essential contact information was missing, TWDB and SRC staffers were able to obtain telephone numbers using on-line and printed directories; however, no phone numbers could be located for approximately 12% of the original sample. This 12% consisted of mostly residential and business customers, as contact information for municipalities proved much easier to obtain.

In some cases, customer records were simply too incomplete be researched and had to be replaced. The majority of these records included customers who had used TNRIS products and services available on-line. In many of these cases, the only contact information provided was an email address, making it impossible to look up telephone numbers for these customers. Development of a standardized, centralized customer database should resolve such discrepancies, improving the results of future customer surveys.

The objective for sampling was to draw numbers that would result in at least 50 respondents who had used TNRIS's services, 200 who had used OPFCA's services, and 250 who had used Planning and/or

Data Resources' services. Based on data file information and responses to the interview script, these goals were not only met, but exceeded: 306 respondents were identified as having used TNRIS services, 316 respondents were identified as having used OPFCA's services, and 375 respondents were identified as having used Planning and Data Resources' services.

While the sampling targets were met, a portion of the customers interviewed did not complete all sections of the survey. Before being asked detailed questions regarding specific TWDB departments, respondents were read a brief description of the department and its services. Any respondents who felt they lacked the knowledge or experience to rate a department's specific attributes skipped to the next section of the survey. These respondents tended to be those who have had fewer contacts with TWDB or those who have been TWDB customers for shorter periods of time.

TABLE 2: SAMPLE COUNTS RELATED TO EACH DEPARTMENT		
Department	**Rated Services Used**	**Rated Specific Departmental Attributes**
TNRIS	306	215
OPFCA	316	164
Planning and Data Resources	375	207

RESPONSE RATES

As Table 3 illustrates, 625 of the 1,887 telephone numbers sampled were classified as invalid. From the 1262 valid phone numbers, 511 surveys were ultimately completed, for a response rate of 40.5%. The response rate is calculated by dividing the number of completed interviews by the number of valid telephone numbers in the sample.

TABLE 3: CALCULATION OF SURVEY RESPONSE RATE		
Category	**Valid Numbers**	**Invalid Numbers**
No answer, busy signal, or voicemail	363	
Fax, wrong number, disconnect, or language barrier		442
Callback scheduled, but not completed	316	
Refusals	72	
Minimal contact or no memory of contact with TWDB		183
Completed interviews	511	
TOTAL	**1262**	**625**

DATA COLLECTION

On August 31, a pre-contact letter was sent to the initial sample of 1,150 customers, informing them that they would be contacted by telephone during the month of September to participate in the survey. A pretest of the instrument was performed on September 5. Minor corrections were made to the instrument at that time, and full-scale interviewing took place between September 6 and September 27, 2001. All telephone interviews were conducted from SRC's telephone bank in Denton, Texas. An experienced telephone supervisor was on duty at all times to supervise the administration of the sample, monitor for quality control, and handle any other contingencies. Shifts of interviewers administered the survey on weekday mornings and afternoons. All active telephone numbers in the sample were tried at least five times, using a rotating schedule of callbacks to ensure that numbers were tried at different times of the day.

Interviewers received training in three areas: the details and purpose of the survey; telephone interviewing methods; and the survey instrument (including the names of TWDB programs). Each question was discussed, and the specific instructions on the questionnaire were explained. The interviewers were provided with written material on the interviewing process and information about TWDB services. Each interviewer also conducted several practice interviews before dialing customers.

SRC used the Sawtooth Windows-based Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (WinCATI) system to allow on-line interviewing and continual data entry for each respondent. The software automatically takes the interviewer through any skip or branching patterns in the instrument, eliminates incorrect response codes, eliminates the need for separate data entry, and allows for frequent tabulation of data as the survey proceeds.

ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The raw data file was analyzed using SPSS for Windows statistical software, version 10.0. The data analysis involved two steps. First, the observed frequencies or percentages for each question were calculated. Each question was then cross-tabulated with five descriptive characteristics, as shown in Table 4. These characteristics comprise a set of independent variables that help to explain variations among the responses of TWDB customers. SRC only reported statistically significant differences between groups, as reporting on inter-group differences that are not statistically significant could be misleading. Additionally, "don't know" responses were treated as missing data and dropped from the analysis, unless they made up 10% or more of the responses to a question.

TABLE 4: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS		
	Count	**Percent**
Customer type		
Local water supply entity	76	14.9%
Municipal government	168	32.9%
Consultants/engineers	129	25.2%
State or federal government	31	6.1%
Business	27	5.3%
Other/unknown	80	15.7%
Community size		
Less than 5,000	107	21.6%
Between 5,000 and 15,000	70	14.1%
Greater than 15,000	319	64.3%
Time of first TWDB contact		
Within past year	51	10.6%
2 years ago	52	10.8%
3 years ago	58	12.0%
4 years ago	27	5.6%
5 to 6 years ago	59	12.2%
7 to 10 years ago	59	12.2%
10 or more years ago	176	34.4%
Number of contacts with TWDB		
1 to 5 times	221	48.8%
6 to 10 times	71	15.7%
More than 10 times	161	35.5%
Most recent contact with TWDB		
Within last 3 months	266	52.1%
Within last 6 months	76	14.9%
Within last year	71	13.9%
Within last 2 years	29	5.7%
More than 2 years ago	12	2.3%
Don't know	57	11.2%

CUSTOMERS' EVALUATIONS OF PRODUCT AND SERVICE QUALITY

The External Customer Survey was designed to assess customers' satisfaction both with the TWDB as a whole and with the individual programs through which they have received products or services. All customers were asked to evaluate the TWDB overall, including its products and services, facilities, web site, and problem-resolution process. Customers who were identified as having used products or services offered by TNRIS, OPFCA, and/or the Planning and Data Resources divisions were also asked a series of program-specific questions. These questions varied by program and included specific questions about particular products and services, along with standard questions intended to evaluate the department's service delivery, the professionalism of its staff, its publications and communications, and the quality of its products and services overall. Customers were also given the opportunity to provide verbatim comments, clarifications, and suggestions for improvement at several points during the course of the survey. Summaries of the findings from each section of the survey follow.

RATINGS OF THE TWDB OVERALL

The TWDB was rated highly as a whole, with 94.8% of all respondents characterizing their overall satisfaction with TWDB as excellent (52.8%) or good (42.0%). Ninety-six percent of the respondents reported that they intend to use TWDB products or services again in the future, and 96% would recommend the TWDB to others.

Demographic analysis revealed that customer satisfaction increased with the size of the customer's community or region, with the length of time the respondent had been a TWDB customer, and with the total number of contacts between the customer and the TWDB. Respondents whose *most recent* contact with TWDB was within the last three months demonstrated the greatest likelihood of using TWDB products and services in the future (84.2%). Respondents who had made their *first* contact with TWDB within the past year were least likely to use TWDB products and services in the future (12.5%) and least likely to recommend TWDB products and services to others (14.9%).

RATINGS OF THE TWDB'S WEB SITE

Approximately 65% of the customers contacted reported that they have used the TWDB web site. The customer groups most likely to have visited the web site were state or federal government entities (86.7%) and consultants/engineers (74.4%). The percentage of respondents visiting the web site increased as the size of the community or region served increased. Respondents whose *first* contact with TWDB was within the past year were the least likely to have used the web site, and the likelihood of visiting the web site decreased as the length of time since the *most recent* contact with TWDB increased.

As Table 5 demonstrates, 84% of the customers surveyed who have used the web site stated that the ease of use was excellent or good, 87% stated that the information provided was excellent or good, and 86% rated the overall usefulness as excellent or good. Seventy-six percent rated the ease in finding desired information as excellent or good. As the number of contacts with TWDB over the past two years increased, respondents were more likely to rate the ease in finding the desired information as fair or poor.

Of the 34.9% of respondents who had not used the web site, 47% were aware of it. As the length of time since the customer's most recent contact increased, both awareness of the web site and likelihood of visiting the web site decreased.

TABLE 5: QUALITY OF THE TWDB WEB SITE				
Survey Item	**Percentage Responding**			
	Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Getting around the web site and ease of use (n=322)	22.7%	61.5%	14.3%	1.6%
Information available on web site (n=323)	26.9%	60.4%	11.8%	0.9%
Overall usefulness (n=325)	24.6%	61.5%	12.9%	0.9%
Ease in finding desired information (n=324)	15.1%	60.5%	21.3%	3.1%

RATINGS OF TWDB FACILITIES

Over 52% of the customers interviewed had visited TWDB headquarters in Austin, and 10.4% had visited a regional field office. Of those who had visited the Austin headquarters, 89.7% rated cleanliness as excellent or good, 78.5% rated comfort as excellent or good, and 73.8% rated accessibility as excellent or good. Of those who had visited a regional office, 96% rated cleanliness as excellent or good, 86% rated comfort as excellent or good, and 92% rated accessibility as excellent or good.

TABLE 6: RATINGS OF TWDB FACILITIES				
Survey Item	**Percentage Responding**			
	Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Austin Headquarters				
Cleanliness (n=260)	33.5%	56.2%	10.0%	0.4%
Comfort (n=260)	25.0%	53.5%	19.6%	1.9%
Accessibility of location (n=263)	17.5%	56.3%	16.7%	9.5%
Regional Field Offices				
Cleanliness (n=50)	32.0%	64.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Comfort (n=50)	26.0%	60.0%	12.0%	2.0%
Accessibility of location (n=50)	26.0%	66.0%	8.0%	0.0%

TNRIS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Ninety-six percent of customers who have used Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS) products and services stated that they were either very satisfied (53.0%) or somewhat satisfied (43.3%) overall. Nearly 93% rated TNRIS products or services as excellent (27.9%) or good (64.9%) overall. Specific attributes of TNRIS products and services were also evaluated and received scores that indicate general satisfaction among TNRIS customers.

Customers who had more frequent contacts with TNRIS were more likely to rate its products and services as convenient and provided in a usable format and were more likely to indicate that TNRIS is able to provide the information they need. As compared to other customer groups, customers representing federal and state government agencies were more likely to agree that TNRIS is able to provide the information they need and that the information provided is accurate.

TABLE 7: RATINGS OF ATTRIBUTES OF TNRIS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES						
Survey Item	Average Score (1-5)	Percentage Responding				
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
TNRIS products and services meet my needs. (n=219)	4.0	0.9%	3.2%	9.6%	65.3%	21.0%
Products and services are convenient. (n=219)	3.9	1.4%	5.0%	11.0%	68.0%	14.6%
Products and services are easy to use. (n=219)	3.9	1.8%	3.2%	12.8%	69.9%	12.3%
Information provided by TNRIS is accurate. (n=214)	4.0	0.5%	3.7%	14.0%	63.1%	18.7%
Information is provided in a format I can use. (n=218)	4.0	1.4%	1.4%	6.9%	75.7%	14.7%
TNRIS is able to provide the information I need. (n=219)	4.0	0.9%	3.2%	10.0%	69.9%	16.0%
Products and services are provided in a timely manner. (n=219)	4.0	0.9%	2.7%	8.2%	75.8%	12.3%

Respondents were also asked questions about specific TNRIS products and services. Ninety-seven percent of customers who had attended a TNRIS conference or training seminar rated the event as either excellent (42.0%) or good (55.0%), and 93% of customers who had used map or data services rated them as excellent (42.0%) or good (51.2%). The percentage of respondents rating map and data services as excellent increased as number of times they contacted TNRIS increased (ranging from a low of 34.8% for customers with one to five contacts to a high of 57.1% for customers with more than 10 contacts).

Evaluation of TNRIS Web Site

Approximately 67% of the TNRIS customers surveyed had used the TNRIS web site, and of these, 96.5% would recommend the web site to others. Seventy-seven percent of TNRIS web site users rated the ease of navigation as excellent or good, 80% rated the information provided as excellent or good, 68% rated the ease in finding desired information as excellent or good. Nearly 83% rated the overall usefulness of the web site as excellent or good.

TABLE 8: QUALITY OF THE TNRIS WEB SITE				
Survey Item	Percentage Responding			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Getting around the web site and ease of use (n=143)	16.1%	61.5%	19.6%	2.8%
Information available on web site (n=144)	18.8%	61.1%	18.1%	2.1%
Overall usefulness (n=144)	22.2%	60.4%	13.9%	3.5%
Ease in finding desired information (n=143)	9.8%	58.0%	26.6%	5.6%

Evaluation of TNRIS Staff

Ninety-four percent of the TNRIS customers surveyed rated the division staff's professionalism as either excellent (39.7%) or good (54.2%). Ratings of specific attributes of staff performance also indicate general satisfaction among TNRIS customers, as Table 9 demonstrates.

Survey Item	Average Score (1-5)	Percentage Responding				
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Staff is knowledgeable. (n=219)	4.2	0.9%	0.9%	8.2%	61.2%	28.8%
Staff is helpful. (n=218)	4.2	0.5%	0.9%	7.8%	61.9%	28.9%
Staff is courteous. (n=217)	4.2	0.5%	0.9%	8.3%	60.4%	30.0%
Easy to identify person I need to speak with. (n=216)	3.6	2.8%	10.6%	23.6%	50.0%	13.0%
E-mail and letters from TNRIS provide information I need (n=212)	3.9	0.5%	3.8%	20.3%	55.2%	20.3%
When calling, I am not kept on hold too long. (n=212)	3.9	0.9%	3.3%	19.8%	60.8%	15.1%
Staff promptly returns phone calls. (n=209)	3.8	1.4%	5.3%	21.5%	59.3%	12.4%

TABLE 9: TNRIS STAFF PERFORMANCE

Ratings of staff helpfulness were consistently high, but increased in proportion to the number of contacts with TNRIS, ranging from a low of 4.1 for customers with one to five contacts to a high of 4.4 for customers with more than 10 contacts.

The statement "It is easy to identify person I need to speak with" received the lowest overall scores, but responses varied widely by several demographic characteristics. Representatives of state or federal government entities gave this item a much higher average rating than any other customer type (4.3). Ratings were also highest among respondents who have contacted TNRIS 10 or more times (average rating: 3.9). Ratings decreased as the length of time since the most recent contact with TNRIS increased.

Average ratings for the item "Staff promptly returns phone calls" were highest for state or federal government respondents (4.1) or other/unknown respondents (4.0). Respondents from the business and consultant/engineer customer groups had ratings below average (3.5 and 3.6 respectively). This discrepancy suggests that different customer groups may have different expectations regarding service delivery.

In addition to answering the closed-ended survey questions, respondents were prompted to provide verbatim suggestions for improvement. Only one-third of the TNRIS customers surveyed (32.6%) offered any suggestions for improvement. Of these, the most common responses were to improve the web site and to ensure that information provided is accurate and up-to-date.

OPFCA CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Over 96% of customers of the Office of Project Finance and Construction Assistance (OPFCA) reported that they were either very satisfied (45.4%) or somewhat satisfied (50.9%) overall. Nearly 88% rated OPFCA products and services as excellent (31.5 percent) or good (56.2 percent). Specific attributes of OPFCA products and services were also evaluated and received scores that indicate general satisfaction among OPFCA customers.

The only statistically significant difference among customer groups in evaluating OPFCA products and services emerged from how they responded to the statement "OPFCA products and services meet my needs." Respondents from communities with populations greater than 15,000 and customers with more frequent contact with OPFCA had higher levels of agreement with this statement than those from smaller communities or those with fewer contacts.

TABLE 10: RATINGS OF ATTRIBUTES OF OPFCA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES						
Survey Item	**Average Score (1-5)**	**Percentage Responding**				
		Strongly Disagree (1)	**Disagree (2)**	**Neutral (3)**	**Agree (4)**	**Strongly Agree (5)**
Products and services provided by OPFCA meet my needs. (n=167)	4.1	0.6%	2.4%	7.2%	68.9%	21.0%
Products and services are convenient. (n=167)	3.9	0.6%	7.8%	9.6%	67.7%	14.4%
Products and services are easy to use. (n=167)	3.7	3.0%	10.2%	10.2%	64.1%	12.6%
Information provided by OPFCA is accurate. (n=165)	4.0	0.6%	3.0%	8.5%	68.5%	19.4%
Able to provide the information I need (n=165)	4.1	0.6%	2.4%	4.8%	71.5%	20.6%
Products and services are provided in a timely manner. (n=166)	3.9	1.2%	6.0%	9.0%	66.3%	17.5%

Respondents were also asked questions about specific OPFCA products and services. Of the 68 respondents who had received funding through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, 22 were familiar with both the pre-design funding option and the recently implemented installment delivery process. When asked about the effectiveness of the new installment delivery process, 31.8% of these respondents stated it was more effective than the pre-design funding option, 31.8% stated it was about the same, and 36% stated the it was either less effective or much less effective (18.2% each).

Respondents who had contact with OPFCA prior to its 1997 reorganization toward regional teams were asked to rate the effectiveness of financial assistance delivery since the reorganization. Responses were generally favorable, with 45.4% of the respondents stating that delivery effectiveness remains the same, 34% indicating it is more effective, and 13.4% indicating it is much more effective.

Recent changes that require OPFCA to document the participation of Historically Underutilized Businesses for all project contractors as a condition of eligibility for federally funded projects were also rated. Over 62% of the respondents stated that the change was either very effective (12.9%) or somewhat effective (55.3%).

Evaluation of OPFCA Staff

Nearly 96% of the OPFCA customers surveyed rated the OPFCA staff's professionalism as excellent (51.2%) or good (44.5%). As Table 11 indicates, ratings of specific attributes of staff performance indicate general satisfaction among OPFCA customers.

TABLE 11: OPFCA STAFF PERFORMANCE						
Survey Item	**Average Score** **(1-5)**	**Percentage Reporting**				
		Strongly Disagree **(1)**	**Disagree** **(2)**	**Neutral** **(3)**	**Agree** **(4)**	**Strongly Agree** **(5)**
Staff is knowledgeable. (n=168)	4.2	0.6%	1.2%	5.4%	60.7%	32.1%
Staff is helpful. (n=167)	4.3	0.6%	0.0%	6.6%	57.5%	35.3%
Staff is courteous. (n=167)	4.3	0.6%	0.0%	4.2%	56.9%	38.3%
Easy to identify person I need to speak with. (n=166)	3.8	1.8%	10.2%	12.0%	57.2%	18.7%
Written communications from staff provide info I need. (n=167)	4.0	0.6%	1.8%	10.8%	62.3%	24.6%
When calling, I am not kept on hold too long. (n=166)	4.0	0.6%	2.4%	11.4%	61.4%	24.1%
Staff promptly returns phone calls. (n=167)	4.0	2.4%	3.6%	10.8%	62.9%	20.4%

When asked to assess the helpfulness of the OPFCA staff, responses varied according to the size of the community served by the respondent. Ratings ranged from 4.1 for respondents from communities with populations between 5,000 and 15,000 to 4.4 for respondents from communities greater than 15,000. Scores were negatively correlated with the length of time since the customer's most recent contact, decreasing from a high of 4.3 for customers who have contacted OPFCA within the last three months to a low of 3.7 for customers whose most recent contact was two or more years ago.

Recency of last contact also appeared to influence customers' assessments of the ease with which they can identify the correct person to speak with and of the information provided in written correspondence. In response to these items, respondents who had contacted OPFCA within the last three months gave the highest average ratings (4.1 for both statements), while the lowest average ratings (3.7 for both statements) were given by respondents who had last contacted OPFCA over two years ago.

Frequency of contact with OPFCA was positively correlated with customers' assessments of hold times. Respondents who contacted OPFCA more than 10 times were more likely to agree they were not kept on

hold too long (average score: 4.4) as compared to respondents who contacted OPFCA 1 to 5 times (average score: 4.0) or 6 to 10 times (average score: 3.9).

In addition to responding to the closed-ended survey questions, customers surveyed were also asked to provide verbatim suggestions for improvement. Most of the OPFCA customers' comments suggested increasing funding or changing funding procedures. Other comments suggested reductions in bureaucracy and "red tape" and increased cooperation with other departments and state agencies. However, less than one-fourth (22.0%) offered any suggestions for improvement.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH THE PLANNING AND DATA RESOURCES DIVISIONS

Ninety-seven percent of Planning and Data Resources customers reported that that they were very satisfied (47.4%) or somewhat satisfied (49.3%) overall. Over 93% rated Planning and Data Resources products and services as excellent (30%) or good (63.5%) overall. Specific attributes of Planning and Data Resources products and services were also evaluated and received scores that indicate general satisfaction among their customers.

Average ratings for the ease of using Planning and Data Resources products and services increased with the number of contacts, ranging from 3.8 for respondents who had contacted Planning or Data Resources one to five times to 4.0 for those who had contacted the divisions more than 10 times.

Respondents who had contacted the Planning and Data Resources divisions most recently were the most likely to agree that products and services were provided in a timely manner. Respondents who contacted the divisions within the last three to six months assigned an average rating of 4.1 for this item, whereas respondents whose most recent contact was longer than 6 months ago assigned average ratings of 3.8 or less.

TABLE 12: PLANNING AND DATA RESOURCES PRODUCTS AND SERVICES						
Survey Item	Average Score (1-5)	Percentage Reporting				
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Products and services provided by Planning and Data Resources meet my needs. (n=213)	4.0	0.0%	3.8%	13.1%	65.7%	17.4%
Products and services are convenient. (n=213)	3.9	0.5%	3.3%	14.1%	67.6%	14.6%
Products and services are easy to use. (n=213)	3.9	0.0%	4.7%	13.6%	68.1	13.6%
Information provided by Planning and Data Resources is accurate. (n=211)	3.9	0.5%	6.6%	14.2%	64.0%	14.7%
Planning and Data Resources are able to provide the information I need. (n=213)	3.9	0.0%	5.2%	8.5%	73.7%	12.7%
Products and services are provided in a timely manner. (n=213)	4.0	0.0%	3.8%	9.9%	70.4%	16.0%

Evaluation of Specific Planning and Data Resources Services

Ten specific types of products and services were given individual ratings by the Planning and Data Resources customers who had used them. All services received high ratings, with technical assistance and information on water conservation services receiving the highest combined excellent/good rating (96.5%) and water use and demand information services receiving the lowest – but nonetheless favorable – combined excellent/good rating (87%).

TABLE 13: RATINGS OF SPECIFIC PLANNING AND DATA RESOURCES SERVICES USED				
Survey Item	**Percentage Reporting**			
	Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Water planning information services (n=260)	40.4%	54.6%	4.2%	0.8%
Groundwater data services (n=125)	29.6%	59.2%	8.8%	2.4%
Surface water monitoring and needs data services (n=78)	28.2%	64.1%	6.4%	1.3%
Assistance with analysis technology for water availability services (n=68)	32.4%	60.3%	7.4%	0.0%
Water use and demand information services (n=108)	33.3%	53.7%	10.2%	2.8%
Groundwater conservation distribution management plan services (n=72)	43.1%	50.0%	5.6%	1.4%
Marketing/transfer of water rights services (n=25)	28.0%	64.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Grants for research, regional facility or flood planning (n=77)	48.1%	42.9%	6.5%	2.6%
Technical assistance and information on water conservation services (n=114)	41.2%	55.3%	1.8%	1.8%
Population and water demand projection services (n=149)	33.6%	55.0%	9.4%	2.0%

Hydrographic survey services were used by 22.5% of all Planning and Data Resources customers. All of these customers responded that the fee schedule was very reasonable (51.5%) or somewhat reasonable (48.5%) for these services. Over 97% reported that they would be very likely (71.1%) or somewhat likely (26.3%) to continue using the surveys if the fee schedule were to be increased by one percent.

Seventeen percent of the respondents reported that they had received hydrogeological data from the TWDB's well drilling rig. Of these customers, 89.7% stated that the fee schedule for this service was very reasonable (27.6%) or somewhat reasonable (62.1%).

Groundwater availability modeling (GAM) services were used by 26.9% of all Planning and Data Resources customers. Of these customers, 80.7% rated the service as excellent (29.8%) or good (50.9%)

Sixty-three percent of the Planning and Data Resources customers interviewed had participated in a Regional Water Planning Group. Of these customers, 63.8% stated that the TWDB staff was very helpful in the Regional Water Planning process, while an additional 25.4% reported the staff was helpful and 10% found the staff to be somewhat helpful.

All Planning and Data Resources respondents were asked if they would be interested in obtaining data on reservoir sedimentation rates. Over half of the respondents were very interested (21.6%) or somewhat interested (33.8%).

Funds for the TWDB to provide grants for flood protection and mitigation and regional water and wastewater facility planning will run out in FY03. Respondents were asked how helpful continuation of these services would be to Texans. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents (68.3%) stated it would be very helpful, and one-third (29.2%) stated it would be helpful. The percentage of respondents stating that continuation of these grants would be very helpful increased as community size and number of contacts with the Planning and Data Resources divisions increased.

Evaluation of Planning and Data Resources Divisions Staff

Every Planning and Data Resources customer interviewed rated Planning and Data Resources staff professionalism as either excellent (41.1%) or good (58.9%) overall. Ratings of specific attributes of the staff's performance indicate general satisfaction among customers of the Planning and Data Resources divisions.

TABLE 14: PLANNING AND DATA RESOURCES STAFF PERFORMANCE						
		Percentage Reporting				
Survey Item	Average Score (1-5)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Staff is knowledgeable. (n=212)	4.2	0.0%	0.5%	9.0%	64.6%	25.9%
Staff is helpful. (n=213)	4.1	0.0%	0.5%	8.9%	68.1%	22.5%
Staff is courteous. (n=212)	4.2	0.0%	0.5%	6.1%	63.7%	29.7%
Easy to identify person I need to speak with. (n=211)	3.8	1.9%	8.1%	16.1%	54.0%	19.9%
Written communications from staff provide info I need. (n=211)	4.0	0.5%	1.9%	11.4%	65.9%	20.4%
When calling, I am not kept on hold too long. (n=207)	4.1	0.5%	1.4%	15.0%	68.6%	14.5%
Staff promptly returns phone calls. (n=206)	4.0	0.0%	1.5%	17.0%	67.0%	14.6%

A number of demographic trends emerged from this analysis. First, the average ratings of staff knowledge and ease in identifying the right person to speak with both increased with the number of contacts with the Planning and Data Resources divisions. Second, the average ratings of staff helpfulness and courtesy increased as the size of the community served increased. Third, the average ratings of ease in locating the right person to speak with, helpfulness, staff knowledge, and the informational value of written correspondence increased as the recency of the customers' last contact increased. For example, the information provided in written communications received average scores ranging from a high of 4.2 from

respondents who had contacted Planning and Data Resources within last 3 months to a low of 3.3 from those who had made their last contact over two years ago.

Verbatim suggestions for improvement were provided by 21.7% of the Planning and Data Resources customers surveyed, and their responses varied widely. Some of the more common suggestions focused on increasing the scope and accuracy of information provided. Requests were also made for increased funding and increased contact with TWDB personnel.

RATINGS OF TWDB PUBLICATIONS

Respondents who used the services of a particular department were asked to rate the publications it produces. Over 90% of the respondents rated the publications of each department as either excellent or good, with little variation in the ratings among departments.

TABLE 15: QUALITY OF PUBLICATIONS BY DEPARTMENT				
Department	Percentage Reporting			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
TNRIS (n=210)	32.4%	60.5%	5.7%	1.4%
OPFCA (n=154)	34.4%	59.7%	5.2%	0.6%
Planning and Data Resources (n=203)	30.0%	63.5%	6.4%	0.0%

FAMILIARITY WITH TWDB PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

In addition to gathering information on customer satisfaction with the TWDB products and services they had used, the survey assessed customers' familiarity with other TWDB offerings. As Table 16 indicates, customers' familiarity with TWDB products and services varied considerably. Respondents were most familiar with Regional Water Planning (81% very or somewhat familiar), publications (79% very or somewhat familiar), State Water Planning (77% very or somewhat familiar), water conservation planning assistance (76.8% very or somewhat familiar), and financial assistance programs (71% very or somewhat familiar). Respondents were least familiar with the State Water Bank (62.7% not familiar).

In general, familiarity with TWDB products and services increased with community size, the length of the customer's relationship with the agency, and the number of contacts with the agency. Although results varied by program according to the recency of the customers' last contact with TWDB, no recognizable trend emerged among the different products and services in relationship to this variable.

TABLE 16: FAMILIARITY WITH TWDB PRODUCTS AND SERVICES			
Product or Service	**Percentage responding**		
	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not familiar
Regional Water Planning (n=510)	38.2%	42.4%	19.4%
Publications (n=508)	27.0%	51.8	21.3%
State Water Planning (n=507)	30.4%	46.5	23.1%
Water conservation planning assistance (n=508)	27.6%	49.2	23.2%
Financial assistance programs (n=508)	32.3%	39.0	28.7%
Surface and groundwater data collection & distribution services (n=507)	19.7%	47.1%	33.1%
Research and regional facilities planning and financial assistance (n=509)	20.8%	44.8%	34.4%
Technical assistance (ground-water investigations, lake surveys, smoke testing, etc.) (n=509)	12.8%	44.4%	42.8%
TNRIS (n=509)	21.0%	34.2%	44.8%
GIS data and/or mapping services (n=508)	19.5	33.5%	47.0%
Groundwater Availability Modeling (GAM) (n=509)	16.9	36.0%	47.2%
State Water Bank (n=507)	5.9	31.4%	62.7%

FEEDBACK ON PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Of the 511 customers surveyed, only 27 respondents (5.7%) indicated that they had reported a problem with a product or service they received from the TWDB. Of these, 62.9% reported their problem had been completely or partially resolved (29.6% and 33.3% respectively).

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

As Table 17 shows, the number of suggestions for improvement offered by survey respondents varied according to the department to which the suggestions were directed. Overall, approximately one-fourth of the TWDB customers surveyed provided suggestions for improvement. The nature of the suggestions provided for each department is summarized in the preceding text.

TABLE 17: NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS OFFERING SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT	
Department	**Suggestions Received**
TNRIS	70
OPFCA	36
Planning and Data Resources	45
Total suggestions	151
Respondents making suggestions	131 (25.6% of total)

CUSTOMER-RELATED PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The TWDB's customer-related performance measures include both standard and TWDB-defined indicators relating to customer service initiatives for the agency. The agency seeks to understand customers' expectations related to service quality and to implement agency-wide benchmarks that will enhance its customers' service encounters with the agency.

GOAL 3

The TWDB's Strategic Goal 3 illustrates the agency's commitment to customer service quality by stressing the importance of supporting the agency's internal customers (employees) in order to promote excellent service delivery to external customers.

> ***Goal 3:*** *Maintain a motivated, diverse and educated workforce committed to providing quality performance and excellent customer service.*

The first three objectives under this goal concern employee development and are detailed in the agency's Workforce Plan. Objectives 4 and 5 attempt to align service delivery and performance with customer-driven service standards. Each objective and its associated measures are explained in detail below and are illustrated graphically on Page 26.

Objective 03-04

> ***Objective 03-04:*** *Establish continuous customer feedback mechanisms to gather information on our customers' expectations and desired level of customer service.*

On its own initiative, the TWDB first began to elicit customer feedback in 1993. The External Customer Survey was developed to determine how effectively the agency's programs and services were meeting customers' needs. Results from this survey led to significant improvements to the TWDB's loan programs. Since then, the agency has conducted three more customer surveys (in 1996, 1998, and 2001) to gauge the agency's performance and its success in satisfying customers' expectations. Thus, the TWDB's ongoing experience with implementing customer surveys has facilitated the cost-effective integration of this objective into the agency's operations.

Outcome measures 03-04.01 and 03-04.02
Outcome measures 03-04.01 and 03-04.02 are standard agency measures required by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office.

> ***Outcome 03-04.01:*** *Percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received.*

<u>Performance in FY2002</u>*:* Based on an average of previous satisfaction ratings from surveys conducted in 1993, 1996, and 1998, the TWDB estimated the percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received to remain in the 90th percentile. However, actual performance was significantly higher than projected, with nearly

95% of customers reporting overall satisfaction with TWDB product and service delivery.

Outcome 03-04.02: Percentage of surveyed customer respondents identifying ways to improve service delivery.

Performance in FY2002: Based on an average number of customers offering suggestions for improved service from surveys conducted in 1993, 1996 and 1998, the TWDB estimated the percentage of surveyed customer respondents identifying ways to improve service delivery would decrease to 35%, owing to the agency's implementation of past suggestions. Actual performance exceeded this projection, as only 25.6% of customers surveyed provided suggestions for improvement.

Strategy 03-04.01

Strategy 03-04.01: Survey external customers annually to measure/determine:

- Satisfaction levels regarding reliability of information and timeliness of delivery of services;

- Satisfaction levels regarding responsiveness, knowledge, courtesy, and customized attention of the TWDB staff;

- Satisfaction levels regarding appearance of tangibles (facilities, equipment, personnel, printed information) of services;

- Customer expectations/perceptions of agency services; and

- Customers' perceptions of environmental trends (economic, social, political, technological) that may affect their service expectations.

The last bullet above serves as a revealing performance indicator for the agency, providing feedback on how well the agency currently satisfies customers' needs and how this satisfaction may change in the future due to increased competition, advances in technology, or other shifts in the industry.

All of the output, efficiency, and explanatory measures falling under Strategy 03-04.01 are required by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office.

Output Measure 03-04-01.01
Number of customers surveyed

Output Measure 03-04-01.02
Number of customers served

Efficiency Measure 03-04-01.01
Cost per customer surveyed

Explanatory Measure 03-04-01.01
Number of customers identified

Explanatory Measure 03-04-01.02
Number of customer groups inventoried

Strategy 03-04.02

Strategy 03-04.02: *Assess survey results from Strategy 03-01.01 and communicate/make recommendations to the agency staff for service improvements.*

Once data collection on customer satisfaction is completed, results are then analyzed to identify possible process improvements or areas in the agency that need increased education or marketing efforts. During this process, the agency pays particular attention to the verbatim suggestions for improvement provided. Program areas use this information to review and implement any necessary program or process changes that will benefit customers or save money.

The two output measures associated with Strategy 03-04.02 quantify the number of survey respondents making suggestions for improvement and the average number of suggestions made. This information helps the agency to determine if multiple requests have been made for a particular process improvement and indicates levels of demand and dissatisfaction with the TWDB's programs and services.

Output Measure 03-04-02.01
Number of suggestions received for improvement of TWDB services

Output Measure 03-04-02.02
Number of surveyed customer respondents recommending improvements to services

Objective 03-05

Objective 03-05: *Develop customer service standards that focus employees on satisfying the requirements of customers for remote service encounters, phone service encounters, and face-to-face service encounters.*

Objective 03-05 ties together all of the customer service standards specified in the TWDB's *Compact with Texans*. Its associated performance measures assess the timeliness of responses to complaints and information requests as well as web site design and accessibility.

This objective addresses any contact customers could have with the agency via email, web site, face-to-face contact, phone, fax, or written correspondence. As every contact with an agency employee, facility, or publication can color a customer's perception of the TWDB, consistent standards for customer service quality are essential to ensuring a positive experience for every customer in every service encounter.

Outcome Measure 03-05.01

Outcome 03-05.01: Percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing satisfaction with service delivery

Performance in FY2002: The TWDB projected the percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing satisfaction with service delivery to be 70% or higher. Actual performance for all agency departments far exceeded projections, with 93% of TNRIS and Planning and Data Resources customers and 88% of OPFCA customers expressing satisfaction with service delivery.

Strategy 03-05-01

Strategy 03-05-01: Institute an agency complaint handling process for consistently and effectively responding to customer complaints regarding service quality/delivery.

In the past, all divisions of the agency handled complaints according to their own internal guidelines, with response times varying by division. Additionally, complaint information was scattered among different divisions and was rarely stored or tracked to educate employees about customer needs or to identify trends and potential solutions. Strategy 03-05-01 puts the burden of complaint handling on the agency as a whole, establishing clear and consistent goals for responding to customers. The centralized process involves one contact person overseeing the coordination and administration of complaint handling for the entire agency, ensuring faster and more consistent complaint resolution.

Output Measures 03-05-01.01 to 03-05-01.03
Output measures associated with Strategy 03-05-01 involve documenting the number of complaints received and assessing how quickly they were addressed. The agency goal is to respond to complaints within five working days.

Output Measure 03-05-01.01: Number of complaints received

Output Measure 03-05-01.02: Number of complaints addressed

Output Measure 03-05-01.03: Number of complaints addressed within five working days

Efficiency Measure 03-05-01.01

Efficiency Measure 03-05-01.01: Number of staff and workload hours involved in resolution of complaint

This efficiency measure allows the TWDB to assess the workload hours and human resources involved in resolving customer complaints and to determine if process modifications or additional resources are needed for complaint resolution.

Strategy 03-05-02

Strategy 03-05-02: Establish agency standards for responding to information requests in a timely manner.

Strategy 03-05-02 calls for the TWDB to develop consistent agency-wide standards for responding to customers' requests for information. This strategy is being implemented in a phased approach, with the TWDB currently collecting any data possible and later, as additional human and technological resources become available, launching a process similar to the complaint-handling process described above. The agency goal is to resolve information requests within five working days.

Output Measures 03-05-02.01 and 03-05-02.02
Output measures associated with Strategy 03-05-02 entail tracking the number of information requests the TWDB receives, documenting the most frequent types of requests, and evaluating the agency's success in responding to requests within five working days of receipt.

Output Measure 03-05-02.01: Number of information requests received, broken down by type of request (i.e., email, phone, or walk-in)

Output Measure 03-05-02.02: Number of information requests addressed within five working days

Strategy 03-05-03

Strategy 03-05-03: Initiate agency web standards that make information easily accessible to customers via the TWDB web site and convey a professional, service-oriented image.

Strategy 03-05-03 requires the application of agency web standards to the TWDB web site and related web pages, in order to provide customers with a consistent, user-friendly on-line experience. TWDB web standards are outlined in the TWDB's *Compact with Texans*. Customer feedback regarding the usefulness of the TWDB's web site will continue to be solicited frequently (via the web site, customer survey, and other means).

Efficiency Measure 03-05-03.01

Efficiency Measure 03-05-03.01: Number of staff hours involved in web site creation/maintenance

This efficiency measure assists the TWDB in assessing the workload and human resources involved in creation and maintenance of the agency's web site.